



NURSING ASSOCIATE STANDARD – APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING POSITION

This guidance provides additional information to the health sector around the clinical placement activity in this apprenticeship standard. It is for information only and does not replace the requirement to follow the Apprenticeship Funding Rules.

Queries should be directed as follows:

Main Providers: Provider Manager / Service Desk (0370 2640001)
Employer-Providers / Employers: Employer Account Manager / NAS Helpdesk (08000 150 600)

Eligibility

Anyone can become a nursing associate, provided they meet the entry requirements for the programme as [set out in the standard](#), their employer believes they are capable of the academic learning required and they possess the values/behaviours required to become a nursing associate. Employers can [advertise apprentice vacancies](#) to attract new candidates. In addition, individuals who are already working in a health or care setting can talk to their employer if they are interested.

Funding a nursing associate apprenticeship

Apprenticeship funding will cover the cost of the training and assessment (including end-point assessment) up to the maximum of the assigned funding band. Apprenticeship funding includes the funds in an employer's levy account ([find out more about how the apprenticeship levy works](#)). Where there are insufficient funds in an employer's levy account, or the employer does not pay the apprenticeship levy, the principle of employer-government co-investment will apply. This is where the employer contributes a mandatory 10% of the total cost of the apprenticeship with the government contributing the remaining amount.

The Level 5 Nursing Associate standard is assigned to new funding band 18, which means that a maximum amount of £15,000 of apprenticeship funding can be used. As with any apprenticeship, if the employer is able to negotiate a lower rate with a main provider, they must do so. Employer-provider and employers acting as a subcontractor are both required to work on an 'actual costs basis' already. Employers must not profit from apprenticeship delivery to their own employees and they must meet any costs over the funding band maximum.

Clinical placement activity

In the nursing associate standard "at least two substantial placements (totalling 675 hrs) in settings other than the primary place of employment" are required. Up to £2,500 from the apprenticeship service account may be spent on eligible clinical placement costs. A full list of eligible costs is included in the [apprenticeship funding rules](#). The costs that we expect to be associated with the mandatory placements include:

- staff teaching time within the clinical placement,
- planned feedback/assessment (progress reviews), and
- administrative costs related to the training and assessment.



The costs of taking part in the above activities may be included in the costs attributed to the clinical placement activity (and therefore to the total negotiated price of training and end-point assessment). Eligible costs within the placement, above £2,500, must be met by the employer. Ineligible costs must not be included in the price; these include wages, travel, and accommodation costs.

Points to Note:

Subcontracting

It is for employers and providers to agree the delivery of the apprenticeship. However, given the nature of this apprenticeship, the employer is likely to deliver the clinical placement activity.

Where the funding for the apprenticeship has been routed through a main provider, and the employer is the clinical placement lead, the main provider must adhere to the subcontracting requirements set out in the apprenticeship funding rules and make eligible payments to the employer through a subcontracting arrangement. The main provider is responsible for the actions of all delivery subcontractors.

Where the funding for the apprenticeship has been routed through an employer provider, who is also the clinical placement lead, subcontracting is not applicable. Actual eligible placement costs (up to £2,500) would be included in the total price.

Why £2,500?

The Institute for Apprenticeships considered the evidence around the eligible costs of the clinical placements, which was submitted by the Trailblazer group who developed the standard. A maximum of £2,500 was placed on this activity. However, as with the total negotiated price, if the eligible costs within the placement do not amount to £2,500 then the actual costs claimed will be less than this.

This does not mean that the employer (where funding is routed through a main provider) cannot support other aspects of the apprenticeship and be paid for this contribution through a subcontracting arrangement. The £2,500 relates only to the clinical placement activity.

Prior Learning

If the individual has prior learning that would contribute towards the standard, this must be taken into account when negotiating a price. Prior learning will reduce the content required and therefore the duration and the price of the programme.

Inducements

As the activities associated with the clinical placement are eligible costs as defined by the apprenticeship funding rules, this is not considered an employer inducement; they are delivering a legitimate activity associated with the apprenticeship.



Apprentice Contributions

Under no circumstances can an employer ask an apprentice to contribute financially to the direct cost of training or assessment (this includes where an apprentice has completed their programme or has left the programme early (often known as tie-in arrangements or bonds)).

Progression

It is possible to progress from the nursing associate apprenticeship (level 5) another apprenticeship such as the nursing degree apprenticeship (level 6). It would be possible to count the learning and experience gained as a nursing associate towards this apprenticeship, and reduce the length, price and duration accordingly.

Relevant Links:

[Nursing Associate Standard](#)

[Nursing Degree Standard](#)